



Barrow BID AGM

Location: BID Office

Time/Date – 6.00 pm, Tuesday 8th September 2026

Attendees: Paul Hodgson PH, Melanie Corrie MC, Ashley Holroyd AH, Sharon Tate ST, Sarah Roberts SR and Drew Grave DG.

1. Apologies: Sandra Collings SC, Neil Hodgson NH and Kay Kane KK.

Interviews have been held with Jay from Waffle Time (representing the take away sector) and Mark from EE (representing a national retailer). Both were great and very keen. Mark may have problems attending some BID meetings due to work commitments, but if the Board agreed he could send a proxy. The Board unanimously agreed to appoint both candidates as Directors.

2. Review of minutes from last meeting – all agreed.

3. Finance. H & S & Team Update – PH had sent out a report. Jack has now left and Aaron has been taken on as a casual employee. PH has added Barrow Buzz information to the monthly report. BAE promotes Barrow Buzz for new employees moving to Barrow and the University also directs students to the app. DG asked if there is any Barrow Buzz marketing information that could be put in the hotel. PH is currently working on tent cards for this purpose. To support the evening economy there is now a pub and bar tour on the Barrow Buzz app which most pubs have signed up for, with a few more to be added shortly. PH asked the Board to approve the purchase of beer mats to promote the app tour, this was unanimously agreed. SR asked if the BID had any backup for cash flow problems if they arise. PH said that it isn't usually a problem, but a delay in receiving sponsorship payments from larger corporate partners causes issues. The Directors expressed an interest in having a backup especially as the workforce has increased and payment of salaries has to be guaranteed. SR is going to make enquiries with the Furness Building Society concerning this issue. PH asked SR if the Furness Building Society would sponsor the Christmas lights switch on as a headline sponsor. SR will make enquiries.

4. Event Updates/Reviews

- The Soapbox went very well and footfall was about 39000. A record number of teams took part. MC said that she saw things from a participants point of view this year and she asked for it to be minuted that the event was very well organised and everything went well and 'well done' to the BID team. Only negative comments were about the

commentary which was due to technical problems with the speakers not working and problems navigating past the old Red Cross shop due to a window falling out on the day. The Dockside Festival was very busy and worked well.

- Wedding Fair Proposal (Jan 2027) – the Town Hall is now licensed to hold weddings, so the Council wants to hold a wedding fair to promote this. The Council would organise the event but the Directors agreed that the BID would assist by trying to get local businesses associated with weddings to attend the event.
- Tour de France (Stage 2) – this event will be in Cumbria next year. Although not coming near Barrow it is anticipated that it might result in an increase of visitors to the area. The Directors agreed that the BID should be involved with possible race screenings/fan zone. The Council wants the BID to use a yellow theme for their plants next year.
- Christmas events – PH reported that there would be a problem having an ice rink on the stamp card trail day due to the 2 level areas normally used (the town square and the area now occupied by market units) being unavailable. The Directors have been asked to think of alternatives.

5. Dog Friendly Packs – this scheme has been running for a couple of years and businesses are now asking for duplicates or refills. 2 or 3 businesses a month are signing up as being dog friendly. PH asked the Board if he could approach Sir Woofchester to supply refill packs. Everyone agreed to this.

6. Third Term Planning – the Board have to consider new schemes for their next 5 year term. PH made some suggestions:

- First Aid workplace training for businesses and the BID team. St John's Ambulance are able to do the training possibly at the end of December. It could possibly be done on an annual basis. The Board agreed to this.
- Pub and Bar tour beer mats – as previously discussed.
- Business Video – other BID are doing videos promoting businesses and getting the business owners and staff to talk about their business. The Barrow BID team could quite easily pull this together. The Directors also discussed re- doing the Christmas 'Band Aid' video. These proposals were agreed.
- An open meeting for businesses to talk to their local MP, who has agreed to the meeting. This was welcomed by the Board.
- ST also suggested having a toilet partnership scheme, giving access to toilets in businesses signing up to the scheme. A map showing available toilets and accessibility could be put on the Barrow Buzz app. The Directors thought that this was a good idea.

- DG offered to help the BID, if he can, through his links with Cumbria Tourism.

7. AOB – PH announced that the new Christmas arches are arriving on Thursday and he will work with the contractors to decide on where they should be sited. There is no room for the giant reindeer in the same position as last year. The Board agreed that if Dalton Town Council still want to hire it for this Christmas they are happy to allow them to do so. The lease on the BID office has been renewed to run for the 5 years of this term of office. MC announced that PH's pay is up for review and she is to meet with Simon Broadley to discuss this matter. The Directors were in agreement for her to proceed.

Date for next meeting: Tuesday 13th October 2026. 6.00pm @ BID Office